DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 267 327 CG 018 907

AUTHOR Hess, Charlotte M.; Gilgannon, Nancy
TITLE Gaming: A Curriculum Technique for Elementary Counselors.
PUB DATE Apr 85
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Association for Counseling and Development (Los Angeles, CA, April 20-23, 1986).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Consultants; *Counselor Role; *Curriculum Development; Elementary Education; *Elementary School Curriculum; Elementary School Students; Games; *Humanistic Education; *Role Playing; *School Counselors; Simulation
IDENTIFIERS Character Education

ABSTRACT

Recently, emphasis has been placed on curriculum implementation of character development. The elementary school counselor can function as a curriculum consultant by providing a delivery system for affective goals and objectives in the curriculum. Elementary counselors can help administrators and teachers to define learning problems and establish program goals, collect data to assist in determining teaching methodology and strategies, develop a plan and design curriculum, implement the plan, and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. A useful instructional strategy which has suffered a decline in popularity is gaming. Gaming encourages students to explore, discover, and create. Counselors and teachers can observe students' gaming and thus gather information for instructional planning. One form of gaming, role playing, is an effective means for developing decision-making and problem solving skills. Effective use of gaming involves the development of instructional objectives and teacher training. Teachers need to know how to establish affective objectives and use affective education. Character development must come through coordinated learning activities and school counselors have the expertise to act as consultants in this process. (ABL)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED267327

# GAMING: A CURRICULUM TECHNIQUE FOR ELEMENTARY COUNSELORS

Charlotte M. Hess and Nancy Gilgannon

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☑ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Charlotte M. Hess
Nancy Gilgannon
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CG 018907

Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Association for Counseling and Development, New York, NY, April 2-5, 1985.

ABSTRACT

GAMING: A CURRICULUM TECHNIQUE

for

ELEMENTARY COUNSELORS

The article defines the role of the elementary counselor in assisting teachers to implement "character development" into curriculum. Technology has created a need to internalize learning through a humanistic process. During the past decade, learning has emphasized the cognitive domain creating a one-way hierarchy which limits discovery, exploration and creative problem-solving. More thrust needs to be given to affective education.

The elementary counselors functioning as a curriculum consultant to teachers and administrators can provide the humanistic input. A modified behavioral consultation model is suggested for this task. The model would include:

a. the definition of the problem

b. the collection of data

c. the development of a plan

d. the development of lessons and

e. the evaluation of the process

Gaming is a suggested strategy for integrating both cognitive and affective learning. Once a design has been developed Games encourages creativity and allows the learner to engage in problem-solving and decision-making both in a social and academic environment.

The elementary counselor through in-service training can work with teachers to develop facilitative skills and infuse affective objectives into curriculum. This would develop a need for high visibility with this counseling model and hopefully create a balance in instruction.

# GAMING: A CURRICULUM TECHNIQUE for ELEMENTARY COUNSELORS

Charlotte Hess, Ph.D.
Professor

Nancy Gilgannon, D.Ed.
Associate Professor

Department of Curriculum and Foundations
Bloomsburg University
Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania

This age of new and exciting advances in technology has produced many external rewards for most professional disciplines. Educators are certainly among those who have attempted to advance their profession and the satisfaction of their clients through technological innovations. However, there appears to be a crying concern regarding the internalization of learning through the humanistic process. Most recently, professional educational associations as well as the newlyappointedetary of Education, William Bennett, have encouraged curriculum implementation of "character" development. To build "character", emphasis must be placed on a responsiveness to the feeling and aspirations of the learners and this has strong ramifications for the revival of affective education.

During the past decade, as a result of technology and other factors, learning in many classrooms was focused on the cognitive domain. Within the cognitive taxonomy, teachers, through mastery learning, concentrated on developing learning objectives geared to the lower mental operations; importance was placed on the acquisition of knowledge (Paul, 1985). How the learner internalized knowledge was not emphasized. In a sense learning became a one-way avenue with road blocks which limited the discovery, exploration and creative problem solving of the learner. If we deem these as important goals we must remember that they can only be met if the learner learns to value learning and finds a place for what is learned in their thoughts, motives and actions. While cognitions are central to productive learning, psychological constructs must also be considered. If a natural assessment of curriculum could be conducted it is believed that results would display a heavy use of cognitive goals and objectives by educators throughout the country. Teachers and administrators

have been professionally prepared to build curriculum on cognitions but have had very little experience regarding the affective growth and development of learners.

Technology frequently results in a quicker or more expeditious achievement. Affective behavior develops more slowly and may not appear compatible to immediate achievement. Other reasons causing educaters, to resist affective learning stem from the lack of a systematic method to collect information and evaluate growth in the learning area. Regardless of the reason, there is justifiable evidence to believe that the public schools do not presently have those individuals within the ranks of teachers and administrators who can effectively lead in curriculum development and implementation of affective learning experiences. The inclusion of these experiences could result in more effective decision making, problem solving and critical thinking on the part of the learner (Paul, 1985).

Within the structure of the public school system, there exists an individual with the educational background to facilitate and initiate affective experience into curriculum -- the elementary school counselor.

The elementary counselor, functioning as a curriculum consultant to teachers and administrators, can provide the humanistic input needed for the total education of pupils. In providing this input there are many elementary counseling models from which to choose. Typically the counselor has concentrated on "direct service" to the learner (Umansky & Holloway, 1984). But this model has been ineffective within the structure of a public school setting; many of the goals of this model are not compatible with educational structures employed in public schools; budgeting considerations mandate large case loads for elementary counselors, and they have been asked to do more as case numbers continue to increase. Many schools will not consider hiring an elementary school counselor because of a belief that only small numbers of learners would benefit. Also, there is the traditional belief that the teacher is the "real" counselor in elementary education.

However, many fail to recognize that the elementary curriculum has slowly

changed from a child-centered to an academic-centered curriculum. Elementary teachers have expertise in the methodology of academics but possess minimal knowledge of the psychological development of the learner. It is for these reasons that the elementary school counselor who does possess the latter could become a very valuable person through the consulting process with teachers and administrators.

The elementary counselor, acting as a curriculum consultant, can provide the delivery system for affective goals and objectives in the curriculum while concurrently working with teachers in planning affective instructional activities in the classroom. This approach also provides a vehicle for integrating a preventive, developmental guidance program into school curriculum. Activities which focus on affective development could result in achieving such curriculum goals as critical thinking, problem solving and decision making.

A modified "behavioral consultation" model would be the most effective approach for the elementary counselor to employ. Therein, the elementary counselor could work with administrators and teachers to: (a) define the learning problem and establish program goals/projectives, (b) collect data to assist in determining teaching methodology and strategies, (c) develop a plan and design curriculum, (d) implement the plan and assist in the development of lessons, and (e) evaluate effectiveness of instruction (Meyers, et al., 1979).

Behavioral consultation would be used more for curriculum planning. Using the modified model the elementary school counselor working with administrators and teachers would attempt to accomplish the following tasks: (1) establish educational goals and yearly outcomes to be achieved. Goals provide the main mechanism for developing policy or a degree of commitment a school has for the affective development of growth; (2) assist in the development of general objectives which would encompass a set of specific learning outcomes relevant to subject matter. This provides a means for the integration of the affective and cognitive domains. A baseline for accomplishing the above would be through the use of the affective domain: (1) receiving, (2) responding, (3) valuing, (4) organization, and (5) characterization

by a value or value complex (Kratkowski, et al., 1964). The affective domain should act as the basis for generating general objectives once goals have been established. It should be noted that the valuing level is probably the highest level an instructor can realistically be expected to influence a learner. Once the learner becomes committed to a value, the instructor's role is less important. Therefore, affective instructional objectives should be geared to the receiving, responding, and valuing taxonomy levels.

Before attempting to establish affective goals, preexisting educational climates should be assessed or determined. That is, the more closed or restricted the educational climate within a school, the greater the need for establishing affective goals. If teachers and administrators don't provide for diversified instruction, if textbooks are the only instructional tool, if the teacher provides for little learner input and if the learning environment is disorganized, it clearly indicates a great need for affective goal development. An evaluation of the total educational environment should be systematically approached by defining the problem and through the collection of data. Once analyzed an evaluative curricular plan can be designed.

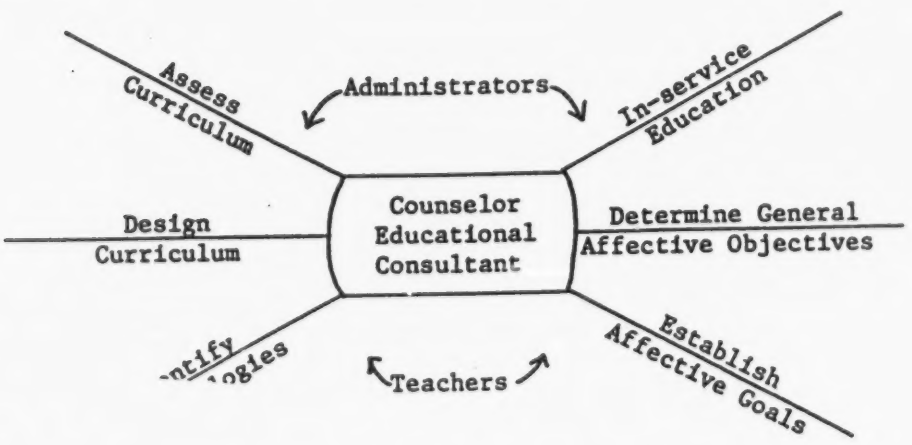
Methodologies and strategies would be approached in an eclectic fashion. Since multi-environments exist within a school structure, facilitating approaches would be selected based on the needs of the learner. Hence, the third task for the elementary school counselor would be to act as a consultant to teachers and administration in identifying teaching strategies. The elementary counselor should work with classroom teacher regarding the selection and the use of a variety of teaching/learning strategies for implementing pre-established learning outcomes. This would include describing the outcomes to be accomplished and how these behaviors would be measured. The elementary counselor would provide in-service training to the staff regarding these strategies and evaluation techniques (Kaczkowski, 1967).

Evaluation methods would encompass those observational tools which provide

for the most systematic means of assessing affective learning outcomes. Checklists, anecdotal records, and rating scales, all tending to measure social and scientific attitudes, appreciation, interest, work habits and physical skills would prove invaluable. In addition, such self-reporting techniques as peer approval, sociometric techniques, problem checklists, and personality inventories would be included. To measure the higher mental functions of the learner, cognitive evaluation could also be added with these evaluation procedures.

In-service education by the counselor would be geared to establishing the teacher's role as a facilitator of learning. Frequently classroom instructional strategies are reduced to the reading and discussion of materials. Such techniques as role playing and simulated gaming activities would become appropriate teaching strategies for implementing affective instructional objectives.

Elementary Counselor
Consultant Model



## Instructional Strategies

Gaming is not a new concept and has a long history of use in both the military and in industry. During the late sixties and early seventies educators began experimenting with gaming in schools (Ruben & Lederman, 1982). As an instructional technique gaming can provide a viable method for integrating both cognitive and affective learning in the classroom.

Conceptually, gaming builds upon the natural behavior of learners. It allows for the learner to become actively involved in instruction. Simulation games in particular provide many vicarious life experiences which ultimately lead to the internalization of experiences. However, during the late seventies and early eighties there has been a decline in the popularity of gaming techniques. A de-emphasis on the affective behavioral components of instruction was thought to be a causal factor spurred by the lack of systematic evaluation and planning methods for such strategies.

Yet many educators argue that the many benefits of gaming far outweigh the lack of tangible evidence of their efficacy. A curriculum that includes gaming encourages learners to explore, discover and create. Gaming encourages creativity; it allows learners to engage in problem solving and decision making both in a social and academic environment. Generic experiences which most learners need in the development of attitudes, values and social skills can be experienced through gaming. Roles, rules and goals are central to the concept of gaming which plays an important part in the development of attitudes, values and social skills. Therefore, instructional decisions should be made regarding how the learner's role, rules and goals fit into curriculum.

Maxon (1973) believed that simulation games could provide positive experiences in the following areas for the learner: communications, motivation, skill development, feedback and evaluation of the activity.

While learners participate in gaming teachers and counselors can observe interactions, the decision making which occurs and the held values of the participants. Through the use of observational tools much information can be gathered and evaluated for

further instructional planning.

Role-playing, a form of gaming, is a particularly effective means for developing decision-making and problem-solving skills. It can create within the learner the need for a logical and systematic process for making judgements. Through role playing, learners can identify problems, collect information, evaluate data as to possible outcomes, explore alternatives and arrive at a decision to be implemented. Hopefully, these processes are internalized and later transferred into life settings.

However, the most important benefit of role playing may be the injection of reality into a given situation. It is an action-oriented approach. Frequently learners feel they do not "belong" and do not participate actively in the learning process. Role-playing provides a non-threatening opportunity to become actively engaged in the learning process.

Furthermore, through role playing learners receive immediate feedback regarding their success in using social skills as well as the efficacy of their decision making and problem solving skills.

The key to the effective use of academic gaming is planning. First, instructional objectives need to be developed in which gaming and other such methodologies can be employed. Then elementary counselor through in-service training can work with teachers to develop their skills in the use of gaming. Special emphasis will need to be given to the concept that during gaming the teacher acts as a facilitator of the gaming process assuming a far more passive role than in most other learning situations. Resistance to this new role can spell disaster for the teacher who is a novice to gaming.

Affective education needs to find a place in curriculum and instruction. Teachers need to know how to develop affective objectives and select the most effective teaching approach to accomplish these objectives. Also, they need to know how to collect data and evaluate affective objectives. The elementary counselor can be the most critical professional in the above process. Acting as a curriculum consultant the elementary counselor can provide the essential ingredient for the

total education of the learner. And this total education should most certainly include academic gaming.

If, as the literature would have us believe, a social readiness has developed for teachers and educators to become involved in the "building of character" of learners who attend public schools then this is an opportune time for counseling and counselors to take a leadership role in meeting this commitment.

They must realize that if the concept of "character development" is to be effectively incorporated into the learning process, articulated direction through curriculum development must occur. Those qualities which are associated with character development develop over time. Therefore, learning activities of this nature need to be sequentially identified and coordinated from one learning experience to another ultimately resulting in the achievement of humanistic longrange goals. Central to this concept would be the goals of improving problem solving and decision making behaviors.

However, with austerity thrust upon us, it would be unrealistic to believe that all school districts employ a sufficient number of elementary counselors to meet the affective counseling needs of the learners on a one-to-one basis. Therefore, it is believed that school districts would employ elementary counselors if they also functioned as consultants for the integration of humanistic education in the curriculum and facilitators for developing instructional methods for its delivery. And one of the most powerful methods they can teach to teachers is academic gaming.

The elementary counselor should have the expertise to cause this to happen. As a curriculum consultant the elementary counselor would achieve a high priority status with much visibility. It is very possible that an end result of schools attempting to include "character development" in curriculum would be a strong developmental/preventive guidance program fused with existing curriculum. Elementary counselors would assume a proactive rather than reactive posture and begin to encourage administrators to evaluate and design a humanistic curricula. If an awareness can be developed with administrators, who are the change agents for the school, then a scheme to include elementary counselors as curriculum consultants is most realistic.

If elementary counselors only react to pending change then an opportunity to give input and determine one's direction is lost. After years of little recognition, an opportunity now exists to become a critical force in elementary school education.

REFERENCES

Kaczkowski, H.R. The Elementary School Counselor vs. Consultant. Elementary School Guidance and Counseling. 1, 103-111. 1967.

Kratkowski, D.R., B.S., & Masia, B.B. Taxonomy of Educational Objectives Handbook II: Affective Domain. New York: David McKay Co., 1964.

Maxson, R.C. Simulation: A Method That Can Make A Difference. The High School Journal, 107-111. 1973.

Meyers, J., Parsons, R.D., & Martin, R. Mental Health Consultation in the School. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1979.

Paul, R.A. Bloom's Taxonomy and Critical Thinking Instruction. Educational Leadership. 42, 36-39. 1985.

Umansky, D. & Holloway, E. The Counselor vs. Consultant from Model to Practice. School Counselor. 31, 329-338. 1984.